

# “Justice was Refused Me, I Resolved to Free Myself”

John W. Lindsay. Finding Elements of American Freedoms in British Canada, 1805–1876

[Record]

Dann J. Broyld

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## Abstract

Though born a free man, John W. Lindsay at the age of seven was abducted by slave catchers and enslaved in Washington D.C. He eventually landed in Western Tennessee where he made a declaration that he intended to emancipate himself no matter the cost. In order to receive the rights, liberties, and immunities granted to natural-born white men in the United States constitution, Lindsay had to flee to the border town of St. Catharines, Ontario. This article will reconstruct the principally unknown life of Lindsay as he negotiated nations, helped to build a Black community in Canada out of

American refugees, and resolved to live in citizenship and equality with his contemporaries.

## Résumé

Né libre, John W. Lindsay a été enlevé par des chasseurs d'esclaves à l'âge de sept ans et réduit à l'esclavage à Washington, D.C. Il a fini par aboutir dans l'ouest du Tennessee où il a déclaré qu'il s'émanciperait peu importe le coût. Afin d'obtenir les droits et libertés accordés aux blancs par la Constitution des États-Unis, Lindsay a dû fuir jusqu'à St. Catharines, en Ontario. Dans cet article, nous proposons de reconstruire la vie de Lindsay, sa fuite des États-Unis, sa contribution dans la création des communautés noires au Canada, et sa résolution à vivre dans l'égalité avec ses concitoyens.

## Biographical note

Dann J. Broyld is an assistant professor of Public History & African American History at Central Connecticut State University. He earned his Ph.D. in nineteenth-century United States and African Diaspora history at Howard University in 2011. His work focuses on the American-Canadian borderlands and issues of Black identity, migration, and transnational relations. Broyld is currently working on a manuscript with the University of Toronto Press.

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